

# Speaking to the soul



## Worship and Bible study

So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. 1 Peter 1: 13

In this opening chapter of his first letter, Peter writes a great deal about salvation. He looks forward to the day when we will see the completeness of our salvation, set free from every trace of sin and all suggestions of death and decay. But he doesn't intend these wonderful spiritual insights to send his readers into an outer orbit of heavenly worship, but rather to equip them to get ready for action. They need to be prepared to face up to the brutal reality of living for God in a world that is fundamentally opposed to the Christian faith.

True worship and Bible study must always have the effect of equipping us to live more faithfully and fruitfully for God in the here and now. They must never be a form of escapism that we use to help us to run away from a challenging and hostile world. God needs us to be fit and ready to face whatever problems and difficulties the world might throw at us. Time and again the Bible tells us about people who worshipped God but whose worship didn't lead to godly action, and God was very severe with them. The prophet Amos spoke about people who were committed to their worship festivals but who happily continued to exploit the poor. God didn't mince his words: "Away with your noisy hymns of praise! I will not listen to the music of your harps. Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice, an endless river of righteous living" (Amos 5:23-24). And it was the same with the Pharisees who were meticulous in their worship and religious practices, but who consistently missed the point (Matthew 23). They were fakes. They had got their priorities wrong.

Let's make sure that worship and Bible study are at the heart of our lives, but also ensure that they lead us to action.

## **QUESTION**

In what way has your recent worship and Bible study led to specific action?

## **PRAYER**

Loving Father, thank you for the way in which you want to shape and bless every part of my life. Amen

*Window - I will give you the Crown of Life*

